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## **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT HONORS EARTH DAY WITH FUNDS FOR TEMPLETON**

**TEMPLETON, MA** – In recognition of the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Earth Day, USDA Rural Development State Director David Tuttle announced \$560,000 in federal funding for Templeton today. The funds which will be distributed to the town in the form of a \$331,855 low-interest loan and \$228,145 grant will allow Templeton to extend its existing water system to serve residents of Baptist Road, Common Road, Lord Road, South Road and South Main Street. "This year's Earth Day theme, '*Action for a Healthy Environment*' encourages Americans to heed President Bush's call to be good stewards of the land and life around us," said State Director Tuttle. "We must be vigilant in protecting our rivers, lakes, and streams from pollutants caused by improper treatment of wastewater. We have a responsibility to future generations to be mindful of the way we treat our environment."

USDA Rural Development became involved in the extension of town's water system after The Templeton Municipal Light and Water Plant (TMLWP) received complaints regarding the quality of water from private wells in the area and data showed that high levels of iron and manganese existed in the areas drinking water. Although there are no known adverse health effects associated with elevated iron levels, reports show that excessive levels of manganese may cause a number of serious health problems. Additionally, fire fighting efforts in the Baptist Road, Common Road, Lord Road, South Road and South Main Street area have been mired by the lack of a public water source.

"This award is great news for the Town of Templeton, in light of the current state budget crisis," said Representative Anne Gobi. "In addition to the impact on the environment, this money will assist the town in providing critical public health and public safety services to the area."

Nationally, Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced today that 45 rural water and wastewater community infrastructure projects in 29 states will receive investment funding totaling over \$105 million. The fund assists rural communities address health and environmental issues and promotes business development.

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Funding for the projects is comprised of \$37.2 million in loans and \$68.3 in grants that will build and improve rural water and sewage systems enabling rural communities to benefit through cleaner water, recreation and wildlife resources.

Included in the funding are Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grants and Solid Waste Management Grants. TAT grants go to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to associations on a wide range of issues relating to the delivery of water and waste disposal services. Solid Waste Management grants are made to public and private nonprofit organizations for providing technical assistance and training to associations to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources and improve planning and management of solid waste facilities.

A complete list of today's selected loan and grant recipients and projects can be found at: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/news.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/news.htm)

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. Rural Development is Rural America's Venture Capitalist. Providing equity, liquidity, and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on these and other rural programs is available at USDA's web site: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/).

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